



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Regular Meeting
June 3, 2008
WALHALLA HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. George Blanchard District I, Chairman
Mr. Thomas S. Crumpton, Jr., District II
Mr. Mario Suarez, District III
Mr. Marion E. Lyles, District IV
Mr. H. Frank Ables, Jr., District V

Oconee County Council met on Tuesday, June 3, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the Walhalla High School Auditorium, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Dale K. Surrett, Elizabeth G. Hulse, Clerk to Council & Mr. Bradley A. Norton, County Attorney present.

Press:

Members of the press notified (via mail): Keowee Courier, Westminster News, Daily Journal, Anderson Independent, WGOG Radio, WYFF TV, WLOS TV WSPA TV & WSNW Radio.

Member of the press present: Ray Chandler–Anderson Independent, Carlos Galarza-Daily Journal and Peter Kent-WSNW.

Call to Order:

Chairman Blanchard called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Blanchard thanked the staff and students at Walhalla High School for helping to make the meeting a success. Mr. Blanchard noted the outstanding SAT record for Walhalla and commended the school and students for their hard work. He also recognized the school's principal, Ms. Evie G. Hughes, along with staff members Ms. Rebecca Duke, Mr. Charles Fowler and sophomore Jonathan Eller [who ran the sound for the meeting] for their valuable assistance.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Blanchard asked Cadet Grant Wooten, Junior ROTC member, to lead the pledge of allegiance to the US Flag.

Public Hearing:

Mr. Blanchard noted that the public hearings for proposed fees and Ordinances #2008-06 & #2008-09 would be combined as issues relating overlap. Mr. Blanchard opened the floor for comment.

Ms. Susan Watson addressed Council regarding her opposition to an entrance fee to the County Parks for citizens wishing to enter either on foot or on bicycle.

Mr. Stan Smith addressed Council regarding his concern that Council is raising taxes through proposed fees and questioned the difference between fees and taxes. Mr. Blanchard addressed Mr. Smith's question stating that fees are set for operation costs and that taxes are a part of milage. Mr. Blanchard reiterated to those present that Council did not raise milage in the proposed FY 2008-2009 budget.

Ms. Lorraine Lawrence wished to discuss a specific agenda item and withdrew her request to be heard at this time.

Mr. John Lawrence wished to discuss a specific agenda item and withdrew his request to be heard at this time.

Mr. J. Harold Thomas addressed Council regarding the Scenic Highway pending ordinance and asked Council to bring it back from committee and have second reading.

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed Council regarding three issues: [1] his opposition to the proposed fee increases/changes in the County Parks, [2] his suggestion that Mr. Suarez resign, and [3] his concern that Council allow the Planning Commission to do the job they were given.

Mr. Walker Ivie addressed Council regarding his opposition to an entrance fee to the County Parks for citizens wishing to walk in for exercise and the removal of the senior citizen discount for camping fees.

Ms. Sara Hornbeck addressed Council regarding her opposition to an entrance fee to the County Parks for citizens wishing to walk. In response to several citizens, Mr. Blanchard stated that there would be no \$2.00 entrance fee charged in the County Parks for people walking into the parks for exercise or to walk their dogs.

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council regarding several issues: [1] her concern with fees at the County Parks that may be in violation of the county's lease with Duke, [2] her concern that milage will have to be increased to fund the Capital Project listing as it is now, [3] her concern that debt service is not accurately reflected in the proposed budget, and [4] her concern that Councilman Suarez missed all of the budget workshops. Mr. Blanchard again reiterated to those present that Council will not raise milage in the FY 2008-2009 budget.

Mr. Charles Graves addressed Council regarding his opposition to County Park fees being raised and charging citizens to walk into the parks.

Mr. Ron Leppig addressed Council regarding his concern that his property taxes will be raised in this budget cycle.

Mr. Duane Wilson addressed Council and read from a prepared handout [filed with these minutes] regarding his concern about the proposed rule change for the County Parks which would limit to 14 days a camper's stay on a water front camping site and that there would be lost revenue to the county if this rule is implemented.

Mr. George Cleveland addressed Council regarding several issues: [1] his opposition to raising the adoption fees at the animal shelter for dogs and cats, [2] his opposition to a COLA for county employees with high unemployment in the county, and [3] his concern about the negative press / comments surrounding review and approval of the SDOC FY 2008-2009 budget by County Council.

Mr. Tom Markovich addressed Council regarding his opposition to the county building another spec building and his support to continued county investment in needed infrastructure.

Mr. B. J. Littleton addressed Council regarding his opposition to Ordinance #2008-14.

Mr. Billy Burton addressed Council regarding his concern that Council operate within its budget and not raise taxes.

Ms. Camilla [unknown] addressed Council regarding her opposition to the removal of the senior citizen discount for campers in the County Parks as proposed.

Mr. Blanchard asked those present if anyone wished to submit to the Clerk to Council any written comments regarding the proposed fees, Ordinance #2008-06 and/or Ordinance #2008-09.

Ms. Susie Cornelius & Mr. Rhett Smith submitted written comments.

Mr. Blanchard called the public hearing at an end.

Minutes:

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Lyles abstained as he did not attend the May 6, 2008 meeting] that the minutes from the May 6, 2008 regular meeting be adopted as printed.

Public Comment Session:

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed Council regarding Ordinance #2008-13 and his concern that the rules/laws be equitably and fairly enforced.

Ms. Lorraine Lawrence addressed Council regarding her concern about a proposed turn lane at the Tanglewood Subdivision.

Mr. B. J. Littleton again addressed Council regarding his opposition to Ordinance #2008-14.

Extended Public Comment Session:

No citizens signed up for extended public comment session at this meeting.

Ordinances for Approval:

Ordinance 2008-13:

Mr. Norton noted that the County is state mandated to update this ordinance.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that **Ordinance 2008-13** “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 1998-10, THE BUILDING CODE ORDINANCE OF OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA.” be adopted on first reading [in title only].

Ordinance 2008-14:

Mr. Suarez noted that he requested the county attorney; Mr. Norton, to prepare a junkyard ordinance to address concerns raised in previous meetings, however, he stated that he felt that more work needed to be done on the Ordinance before a vote should be taken.

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 to **TABLE Ordinance 2008-14** “AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE JUNKYARDS IN OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA.”.

Executive Session:

Mr. Blanchard deferred the Executive Session to the end of the meeting.

Items for Consideration by Council:

Change Order: Oconee County Courthouse ADA Issues:

Mr. Blanchard deferred discussion of this issue to the end of the meeting to be discussed after Executive Session.

County Gasoline & Diesel Additional Funding for FY 07-08:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council and presented them with a revised Agenda Item Summary [AIS] for this agenda item [filed with minutes]. He noted that based on information from the Energy Information Administration that additional funding will be needed to cover costs for gasoline and diesel fuel through June 30, 2008 in the amount of \$100,410.00. Mr. Surrett recommended transferring funds as listed below:

○ Council Contingency	\$ 25,000
○ Non-Departmental Professional	\$ 45,000
○ Vehicle Maintenance Solid Waste	<u>\$ 30,410</u>
	\$ 100,410

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to approve the transfer of funds as outlined above to cover fuel for the remainder of FY 2007-2008.

Discussion of Information Technology Department / Review Agreement:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council regarding the interim services being provided to the county for IT project management with VC3. He also reviewed the agreement with VC3 to provide an additional 12 months of service on an hourly basis.

Mr. Surrett noted that currently there are funds available to cover this agreement's costs; stating that there is at present twenty seven months of vacant staff positions equaling approximately \$100,000. It was his recommendation to authorize funds from this account be authorized to cover the costs of the agreement. In addition, he noted that additional services

from other vendors may be needed and that approval up to \$100,000 was requested for VC3 and possibly other vendors.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 to authorize the administrator to execute the contract with VC3 and approve funding in the amount of \$100,000 for IT interim services from VC3 and other vendors as identified.

Trehel Contract for the DSS Construction Audit:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council regarding the independent audit conducted of the Trehel Contract for construction at the new DSS/DHS building; noting that this was an information report only and that no action was necessary by Council. He noted that all was found to be in order with only one finding that involved a handwriting issue but that it was caught during the process and corrected. In addition, he noted that corrective procedures have been put in place to deal with transcription issues relating to handwriting.

Mr. Surrett thanked all parties involved and singled out Mr. Lake Julian and Ms. Tabitha Harvey, Facilities Maintenance; Ms. Marianne Dillard, Procurement, Ms. Phyllis Lombard and the Finance staff for recognition.

Statewide Case Management Software System Follow-up Discussion:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council regarding follow up answers received regarding the Statewide Case Management Software System. He provided Council with a copy of an email with questions and responses for their review [filed with these minutes].

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 to approve acceptance of the grant for the software package for the court system.

Discussion of Proposed 2008 Fee Schedule Changes:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council and recommended that Council hold an additional Budget, Finance & Administration Committee meeting to address these fees prior to the scheduled third and final reading of the budget ordinance scheduled for June 17, 2008.

Lt. Travis Tillson, Sheriff's Department, addressed Council also and gave detail regarding the proposed fee increases for dog and cat adoption at the Animal Shelter.

Mr. Blanchard scheduled a public workshop for the Budget, Finance & Administration Committee to be held on Monday, June 9, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room, Pine Street. Issues to be addressed will include the proposed fee changes, Detention Center staffing issues, Worker's Compensation, Capital Project listing and personnel issues.

PRT: State ATAX Grant / Blue Ridge Arts Council / \$788.00 / Paul Dohr Exhibit:

It was noted that this request was for State ATAX and not Local as noted on the AIS.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to approve grant funding in the amount of \$788.00 to the Blue Ridge Arts Council to be used to advertise for Paul Dohr "80 in 09...and young at art".

PRT Commission / Upcountry Brochure Service / \$2,760.00:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 to approve the expenditure up to \$2,760.00 to display the "Waterfalls of Upstate South Carolina" through Upcountry Brochure Service to all their SC and Georgia location.

Louise Bell Grant Request “Oconee County the Golden Corner of South Carolina” / \$439.90:

Mr. Blanchard outlined the request from Ms. Bell for \$439.90 to cover the costs to have a 16mm 18 minute movie “Oconee County the Golden Corner of South Carolina” copied onto 30 DVD’s in order to provide the DVD’s to county libraries, Oconee Alliance and Oconee County schools.

Mr. Ables asked that this grant request be sent to the Arts & Historical Commission for their review and approval. After a brief discussion, Mr. Blanchard tabled further discussion and sent the request to the Arts & Historical Commission for their action.

Procurement / Solid Waste MRF Baling Equipment:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council regarding replacement of Solid Waste’s MRF Baling Equipment. He noted that staff recommends the single source purchase of the baling equipment from International Baler Inc in the amount of \$198,530.00 as quoted and \$1,470.00 contingency [total \$200,000.00 from line item #012-718-50840-00] for the reasons stated on the AIS.

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 to authorize purchase of the MRF Baling Equipment from International Baler Inc in the amount of \$200,000.00 as outlined above.

Procurement / Bid #07-16 / Timken Turn Lane / \$320,931.55

Mr. Surrett addressed Council regarding request that they award Bid #07-16 to S&S Construction, Inc of Anderson SC in the amount of \$320,931.55. Goldie & Associates [project engineers for the project] have reviewed the bid and recommend the award. Funding is being provided through Economic Development Set-Aside Grant #S1767 in the amount of \$250,000 and an AT&T #30,000 Utility Tax Credit grant is also being utilized. The remaining funds [\$41,000] will come from County “C” funds. Mr. Jim Alexander, Economic Development Director, noted that 240 new jobs have been created recently at Timken and the need for this lane is a safety issue.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to award Bid #07-16 to S&S Construction, Inc of Anderson in the amount of \$320,931.55 for construction of the Timken Turn Lane.

Procurement / Airport / Streambed Mitigation / \$430,000.00:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council regarding approval for an award for Streambed Environmental Mitigation services at the Oconee County Airport. He noted that staff recommend to Council to award the contract to Talbert & Bright as a single source procurement [specific reasons listed on AIS filed with these minutes] contingent upon official approval and receipt of the FAA Grant which is expected in June 2008. He noted that the FAA will pay 95% of the mitigation costs and that the SC Division of Aeronautics will match 2.5% of the costs also. The cost to Oconee County will be approximately \$10,750.00 [line item # 010-703-60244].

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 to award the Streambed Environmental Mitigation contract to Talbert & Bright as a single source procurement as outlined above.

Procurement / Group Health Insurance Plan Administration Contract:

Mr. Surret addressed Council regarding approval of the Group Health Insurance Plan Administration [Benefit Administrators, Inc / BAI] contract. He noted that Oconee County is self insured and that BAI carries out the administrative functions associated with the plan, i.e., claims processing, etc.

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 to authorize Mr. Surret to execute the 2008-2009 contract for Group Health Insurance Plan Administrator [Benefit Administrators, Inc].

Council Committee Reports:

Transportation:

Mr. Crumpton had no report at this meeting.

Mr. Crumpton scheduled a Transportation Committee meeting for Monday, June 16, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare Committee Report:

Mr. Blanchard had no report at this meeting.

Budget, Finance & Administration:

Mr. Ables reminded those present of the Committee meeting announced earlier in the public workshop meeting to be held on Monday, June 9, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room at Pine Street.

Planning & Economic Development:

Mr. Suarez had no report at this meeting.

Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management:

Mr. Lyles was not present therefore there was no report at this meeting.

Mr. Lyles a Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management Committee meeting for Monday, June 16, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

Commission / Board Reports to Council:

There were no reports presented at this meeting.

Board & Commission Appointments:

ATAX Commission:

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to re-appoint Ms. Barbara Laughter and Mr. Doyle Burton to the ATAX Commission each for a three year term.

Emergency Management Commission:

Mr. Ables noted that Mr. Jim Miles has resigned from the Emergency Management Commission in District V. He again requested interested parties to contact either the Clerk to Council or him directly to have their name considered.

Parks, Recreation & Tourism [PRT] Commission:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to appoint Mr. Dwight Addis, 117 Jamlette Drive, Walhalla, SC 29691, 864-638-7284, to the PRT Commission for District II for a four year term.

Administrator's Report:

SDOC / Blue Ridge Elementary / 5 acres:

Mr. Surrentt noted that he had discussed the 5 acres with Dr. Michael Thorsland and that it was Dr. Thorsland and his recommendation that Council meet with the SDOC Board to work out the detail for usage of the 5 acre tract.

Old Business:

No Old Business was addressed at this meeting.

New Business:

No New Business as addressed at this meeting.

Executive Session:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of receiving legal advice.

Council entered Executive Session at 9:07 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 9:34 p.m.

Mr. Blanchard noted that the Council received in Executive Session legal advice on agenda Item #11, #1: **Change Order: Oconee County Courthouse ADA Issues.**

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to approve the change order for Ard, Wood, Holcombe & Slate Architectural Firm for the Oconee County Courthouse ADA issues in the amount of \$22,500.

Adjourn:

Mr. Blanchard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council